

WAR DEPARTMENT,

SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Richmond Va., May 7, 1862.

In order to provide more systematically and effectually for the necessities of the wounded, during and subsequent to engagements with the enemy, the following Instructions are published for the guidance of all concerned:

I. As soon as an "affair" becomes imminent, an order of the day will indicate to the different corps the exact positions of the several field infirmaries, to which should be sent their respective wounded. These should be surmounted by hospital flags, and chosen, when practicable, in villages, farm houses or barns, without the range of projectiles—but in all cases, so that free communication may be maintained with the front which is in action, and with the rear, whence is to be derived the ambulance wagons and carts to transport the wounded to some fixed hospital in the interior, at a distance from the theatre of war.

II. In the organization of field infirmaries, each brigade will be considered a unit, and should be supplied with its own hospital material, consisting of ambulance wagons, transportation wagons and carts, tents, stretchers, bedding, bandages, lints, medicines, instruments—the whole to be under the immediate supervision of the Senior Surgeon of Brigade.

III. Whenever, in the opinion of the Medical Director, it is deemed necessary or desirable, the material of the several brigades composing a division, will be coalesced, and will constitute, under the immediate charge of the Chief Surgeon of Division, a division infirmary. Upon such necessity ceasing, each brigade will reassemble at its own head quarters, as before, its respective ambulance equipments, which will be held in readiness to move with it, should the brigade receive marching orders.

IV. A detail of men—the number to be determined by the Commanding General—will be made from the line, whose duty it will be to remove the wounded from the field to the infirmaries. They will be armed only with revolvers, and will wear some distinctive badge of office, and will be provided with a suitable number of stretchers, and knapsacks containing dressings, stimulants, tourniquets, &c.

V. This first disposition for the battle having been made, Assistant Surgeons of Regiments, accompanied by infirmary soldiers, thus detailed, will repair to the field, and render such assistance to the wounded as may be necessary—at the same time directing and superintending the removal of those requiring it, as quickly as possible, on litters, to the nearest infirmary.

VI. Regimental Surgeons, during this time, will remain at the infirmaries of their respective brigades or divisions, and attend to the wounded as they are brought in. They will operate without delay, in all cases requiring it, and will see that proper nourishment—such as coffee, tea, bread and soup—is provided in proper quantities by the cooks in attendance. And finally, they will direct and superintend the removal of the more serious cases, and those just operated upon, in spring wagons and carts summoned for that purpose from the rear to the fixed hospitals, rail road depot, or steamer landing previously determined upon. This movement, if regularly maintained from the line of battle to the infirmaries, and thence to the hospitals, or other determined points in the rear, will obviate all confusion, and secure for the wounded prompt and speedy removal from the field.

VII. The Medical Director will have general charge of field infirmaries, and will, when present in any of them, exercise immediate control. He will operate himself when he thinks proper, and decide, in consultation with the senior medical officers present, all questions involving a reasonable doubt as to whether the knife should be resorted to or not. He will see that the different officers perform faithfully the duties allotted to them, and that the wounded receive every attention circumstances will permit. He will also, before the battle, be held responsible for the proper equipment of regiments and brigades, in respect to hospital material, and will require Chief Surgeons of Divisions, when losses occur, to see that requisitions to supply deficiencies are made out by the proper officers, and duly forwarded through him.

VIII. In the absence of the Medical Director, Chief Surgeons of Division will be held responsible for the proper management of division infirmaries, or those of brigades composing the division of which he may be the presiding medical officer, and within the sphere of his control, will exercise generally the duties, in connection with division infirmaries, assigned in the preceding paragraph to the Medical Director.

IX. Senior Surgeons of Brigades, when their commands are detached

from the main body of the army, or when in charge of brigade infirmaries not under the immediate eye of Chief Surgeons of Divisions, or a Medical Director, will exercise full control over the same, in the manner assigned to Medical Directors and Chief Surgeons of Divisions, in paragraphs VII and VIII. They will provide for their brigades the necessary material for field hospitals, and furnish to the soldiers detailed as nurses, full instructions concerning their duties on the field of battle. They will require Assistant Surgeons of Regiments to accompany their respective commands to the field when the fight shall have begun, and to perform there, in conjunction with the nurses, the duty assigned to them. The battle over, they will be directed to return to the infirmaries, and aid in the operations, and in the general care and removal of the wounded. As soon as possible, Senior Surgeons of Brigades will require from Regimental Surgeons full returns of casualties; which shall be forwarded, through Chief Surgeons of Divisions, to the Medical Director.

X. In the event of a forward movement of the army, the battle being over, and the wounded all placed in charge of Hospital Surgeons in the rear, the different field infirmaries will break up and disperse—each brigade assembling, at its own head quarters, its respective material. So too, should a retreat be ordered, the tents and other hospital equipments will be placed in wagons appropriated for that purpose, and retired with the baggage train in advance of the retreating army.

S. P. MOORE,

Surgeon General C. S. Army.

Approved:

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Secretary of War.